BALLET TODAY

1/-

EPTEMBER
053

ORTRAIT OF
OLAND PETIT

lm Choreography
— Prospects

ALLET
SWEDEN

orge Ralov
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HINKING ON
ALANCHIN

etty Slow Drag
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Ballet Digest
— the ballet
month in news
and pictures

Gisela Deege

PHYLLIS BEDELLS

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8.8.53

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2.8.53.

" . . . . . I wish our holiday need never end—I never imagined it could possibly be as lovely as it is—our grateful thanks for a most perfect holiday . . . . " J.E.

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SEPTEMBER 1953 VOLUME 6 NUMBER 8

ballet to-day

Preview..

THIS issue could have been publicised as the CONTINENTAL BALLET TODAY. A penetrating view of France's Roland Petit . . . a long study of Borge Ralov . . . three pages on Swedish developments . . . plus our now-regular page of Paris news. Together these take a major portion of this month's space.

It has been clear since my July issue that the interest of a great many readers lies as much in Continental, American and other oversea dance activity as it does in English news.

That a good number of readers have written to mention 'ballet-decided' oversea holidays rather proves the point. Mr. Frederick Gardiner has mentioned this to me, too.

So I have no apology in my mind as to our contents.

As a matter of actual fact these past two months have had many of their hours given to building the widest newsfront coverage in ballet journalism.

An experienced, alive critic has been appointed in every ballet centre and a number of roving critics will tie the knot in our chain of full coverage. Photographers of international reputation will join those who picture ballet exclusively for this magazine.

Several leading dancers and choreographers have been commissioned to write special features.

All this will lose me the reader who wants to reread again my memories of Pavlowa—I have none—but it is gaining us a readership as tired from backwardism as is ballet itself.

You cannot look to BALLET TODAY for a past-praising mirror. Look to us rather for the hopes, the guesses, the optimisms . . . backed by solid, sure criticism more interested in trends than oft-told tales.

★ Marie Rambert, whose work for English ballet is still anything but slowing. Her Sadler's Wells season is reviewed on page 5.

"LOOK FOR TRENDS"

THE DECENT FOLK

The SUNDAY EXPRESS headlined Beverley Baxter's birthday tribute to Tom Arnold's THE GLORIOUS DAYS with the line "Anna Neagle's Revenge." The article read like Baxter's backbite to other critics who had rightly attacked the musical on its first night.

But Baxter—"right for once" (his own words) — prophesied it would run successfully. And his reason for the prophesy is given as a Moral Warning To Gourmet Critics: there is a place for the show which pleases decent folk and nothing more.

And very nice, too. THE GLORIOUS DAYS, LATIN QUARTER, FOLIES BERGERE and any cheapjack farce or frolic can run as long as Baxter and his decent folk like to sit through them. I'm happy that professionals are in employment, theatres are getting covering houses and the Littlers are paying even higher profit taxes.

NO CRITERIA

But—no thank you—I don't want all this as a criteria for criticism. If it were my criteria I would be handing gold scrolls to Charnley's ALICE IN WONDERLAND and Page's VILIA, to Ballet Theatre's GALA PERFORMANCE and THREE VIRGINS.

The American trade papers have the right technique: critics as accurately cruel as acid on porous surfaces . . . and a dollar-and-cents box office tabulation which gives the public's reaction.

I will gladly print house totals underneath my every criticism but London theatres are more reticent than their American confreres.

On the Cover

● **The name of this very young ballerina is GISELA DEEDGE, a pupil of Tatiana Gsovsky and well known in various ballets by this choreographer such as ROMEO AND JULIET (Prokoffiev), GOYESCAS (Granados), THE ARROW (Fried Walter) and APOLLON MUSAGETE (Strawinsky).**

She also danced Margarete in the famous German ballet ABRAXAS for the Ballet Compagnie after touring Germany.

Two years at the State Opera, Hamburg, as ballerina followed, where she danced The Queen in HAMLET by Blacher and the title role in Prokoffiev's CINDERELLA. For the next season she is again in Berlin, this time at the Städtische Opera and makes her debut as Ophelia in HAMLET.

BALLET THEATRE SEASON

(●Alicia Alonso)

The STANDOUT, The SORRY— The SEASON

CONSTANTIA. This William Dollar ballet mounted on a Chopin concerto is undistinguished except, perhaps, by the dancing of Melisa Hayden and a few moments of group movement.

GRADUATION BALL. Lichin's ballet which I last saw as a dismal, dowdy remnant of the de Basil repertoire is altogether fresh and alive here. Ruth Ann Koesun, a beautiful and easy dancer, was excellent.

FALL RIVER LEGEND. This de Mille work remains a great contemporary ballet. Alonso's dancing of The Accused is undoubtedly of the finest dimension. A dianetic approach to the theme keeps the Accused whirlpooling in upon herself, dragging her company in an ever tightening, reducing circle that is burst open only by the slaughter—the stark white spotlight breaks the circle, spilling the company out to the breadths of the stage . . pinpointing The Accused as alone again.

It is by this tightness that a ballet with slow choreography dominating its scheme seems to rush frantically through its plot to the climax. It is, in fact, the perfect ballet with a strong, real plot carried thoroughly by decisive, unwavering dance. Ruth Ann Koesun again impressed me as The Child. Alonso? Could it be danced better?

BLACK SWAN. Torn from Act Three of LAC and interrupted by constant applause, it is strange the mounting effect this grand pas de deux achieves. Alonso and Youskevitch gave to it a performance of such brilliance and cohesion that it is beyond strict analysis. You watch a hundred performances—a thousand perhaps — and miss the breathtaking majesty (and such facile majesty!) of such a combination as Alonso and Youskevitch. It makes me hate having watched it so often.

DESIGN WITH STRINGS. A grave disappointment. The flow has gone from this Taras work that was once worth the watching merely for the movement flow from position to position.

RODEO. Jenny Workman made an excellent Cowgirl, Kriza as good as before as the Champion Roper, the girls as well-covered, pale and virginal as only de Mille would stock a ranch with. Perhaps too much of de Mille has muzzled one's appreciation. The first pas de deux was rather reminiscent of the major one in **PAINT YOUR WAGON.** But **RODEO** remains an excellent original brand of Americanese and de Mille stylism.

Ballet in Review by PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

GISELLE. Given shoddy decor, atrocious costumes and a sometime stodgy beat, what can you have in GISELLE. Alicia Alonso proves that you can have a great Giselle. Youskevitch proves that you can have a great Albrecht. A bad production was forgotten in the presence of Alonso whose mime and dancing were magnificent. A roundness, softness of technique and a wide span of movement made hers a Giselle of telling beauty. Hayden's Queen of Willis was under-rehearsed, stodgy and thoroughly bad. The corps were funereal in look and — perhaps less their fault than the conductors' — funereal in tempo. At one stage their interlocking took so long I doubted they would stay the course. That they did, and thus managed to leave the stage, was their only virtue.

To page 16

FESTIVAL BALLET'S VILIA

RUTH Page's ballet to the Lehar music produced, certainly, a most merry of widows . . . a most sexy of ballets . . . a most lush of dressing!

But of Ruth Page a few notches above the mere competent, the mere coherent are to be expected. VILIA didn't provide them. Dolin, Wright, Landa, Smith, Trunoff, Briansky and the delightful, lovely Daphne Dale all danced well. Their efforts produced an effervescent, popular piece which will stay the repertoire for some considerable time, I imagine. And, come to think of it, not a bad thing for a new ballet to do. So few—in fact—do.

● Nathalie Leslie

WHAT Covent Garden cannot do with a subsidy, what Ballet Theatre cannot do with a patron . . . Marie Rambert can do with a taste of iron. Her tiny company from its tiny theatre achieves theatre in its largest sense. Comparisons being odious only to the loser, compare Rambert's second act of GISELLE with the others. Here is a showcase stage for the dancers—but dark, magic, achieving the believable setting for willis.

Talking point: what would Rambert have made of Sadler's Wells? Or is that a wishful thinking point?

full moon, empty arms

BALLET Rambert opened a two week season at Sadler's Wells Theatre with an expertly varied programme of uncommon interest.

Hugh Stevenson's beautiful backdrop to LES SYLPHIDES is always worth seeing even if the Chopin music was rather warped by the meagre and mourguish sound coming from the orchestra. Sometimes poor in actual dancing, the directed 'shape' and picture of the work was excellent. A tautness that seemed at first to suggest a failure to use the full stage became, with further sight, a manifestation of firm patterning.

MOVIMIENTOS, apart from the rather too young and English acting of the red-dressed girl, moved rhythmicly and again the decor—by Douglas Smith—was excellent although a fraction reminiscent of **TRICORNE'S** arch by Picasso. Charnley — whose **ALICE** ballet was at Festival Hall this same evening and who was dancing there himself—achieved something of a hat-trick in having his **MOVIMIENTOS** at Sadler's Wells. Conscious of the hat-trick, I noticed that the programme also credited him with writing the music—of course by Hobson.

LES MASQUES by Ashton is light, gay, well danced to Poulenc music.

Ending the first programme, Walter Gore's modern classic **WINTER NIGHT** was exquisitely danced by Mary Munro. Some of Gore's work in WINTER NIGHT to the Rachmaninoff piano concerto is as fine as contemporary ballet can boast. Sincerely sad, this modern Giselle not only hears her lover belonging to another but battles for his love and sees it wane clearly. Noreen Sopwith's New Love was virginal and effervescent with the dewey freshness of young love. Alexander Bennett's Lover was no unmixed good or bad, rather he portrayed a kind man sorry for the woman whose love is not enough to blind him to fresh lips.

But it was with Munro that Gore excelled and it is from Munro that the work exudes tragic, feel-able sadness. The master touch is on such movements as her touching of the Lover's hand as he holds her again. The innate, wonderful woman here who needs only be told she is needed, wanted . . . . love, passion are less than this and Munro proved it.

The sometime vibrant, sometime hauntingly pathetic music was recorded. The night's orchestra could never have played it. ... ...

But this could not be said of Rambert's dancers. No one could have more sadly warmed this **WINTER NIGHT** than the magnificent young dancer Mary Munro.

The **GISELLE** of Beryl Goldwyn has everything in it of a great portrayal. If the role is too much for her young capabilities, it is not too much for her potential. I found her moving and with a lyrical, genuinely seeking approach to the Wilis Queen in Act 2. Her wide-spanned abandon in the Act 1 climax was excellently conceived.

I was not so happy with the Two Peasants whose interminable pas and soli "hogged" (no other word) the first act. Actually Terry Gilbert danced with a fine effectiveness if perhaps he was too glib in part. Noreen Sopwith, too, was excellent. But both plot and principals suffered from the interpolation. Admittedly too much round-dancing during the celebration can become tedious but to rival Giselle and Albrecht is to chance fate and the even less-reliable appreciation of the audience.

I should like to see very much more of Beryl Goldwyn and I have no doubt that I shall. ... ...

SWAN LAKE with Noreen Sopwith and Alexandar Bennet (a strangely contradictory dancer, this) suffered from the heat. Nothing could go right and Bennet partnered clumsily.

The pas de trois insertion hardly helped the plot and neither was it well danced. Sopwith makes a woman of the Swan Princess but lacks the dignity. Nevertheless this performance of hers will be worth seeing as it grows.

DARK ELEGIES to Mahler's beautiful vocal writing — Ellis Keeler sang well—was a morbidly pessimistic work of Jooss-style with some unassimilated gesture. But the "drag" of Tudor's choreography and the plight-ridden acting and dancing of Ann Horn and Mary Munro make it memorable.

I especially liked the hand-cradling in one sequence.

MARY MUNRO

BERYL GOLDWYN

Ballet Digest

NO BERYL GREY

Where Danilova? . . . Ballet Dates

● MARCH APPEARANCE

The August news that Beryl Grey was to have her first baby brought up the old argument of private versus professional life. Beryl Grey loses her place in the American tour, assists Beriosova into higher status and gives Elvin more opportunities. Professionally a mishap. But the dancer who can love enough to put husband and child before her career may well have a warmth and humanity that will carry her even further than had her timing been more professionally weatherwise. Warmest congratulations to her.

● HINDU DANCERS

Sujata and Asoka, hailed as "the most outstanding Hindu dance team in America" appear in THE DIAMOND QUEEN, a coming Warner's film. The two dancers met and married in the Himalayas when Asoka was court dancer to the late Maharajah of Kapurthala.

● WHERE DANILOVA?

Several readers have enquired as to Alexandra Danilova's movements. Since leaving the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1951 she has appeared as guest ballerina with various companies and associated herself with the Dallas school of Edith James.

Danilova spends a quarter of her year with this Texas school and readies the school's dance group for television chores. Currently she is appearing with the Slavenska-Franklin Ballet during their tour. It was from this company that Danilova garnered the group which accompanied her Japanese and S.E. Asia tour.

● MORRIS MAN

Less-well known fact on Keith Lester is that his hobby, too, is dancing: he is a member of the Westminster team of Morris Men and appeared with them recently at the Ring Meeting in Thaxted, Essex.

Keith, who does six shows a day at London's Windmill Theatre, did the choreography for Markova's telecast SERANADE FOR A QUEEN. During August he followed this success with dances for Eric Robinson's TV programme "Music For You" on the fifth.

● BACK ISSUES

Remembering the twopence you must add for postage to the normal shilling, a number of back issues of BALLET TODAY are still available. The October 1952 "met" Nathalie Leslie and Sonia Arova. The november met David Poole, December: Beryl Grey and Ballet in Japan. January 1953 had a feature on behind-the scenes at the Wells. February met John Hart, March met TV's Felicity Gray.

● SEPT. 20 DATE

The London Ballet Circle's lecture on the twentieth will be by Colette Marchand. I also hear that Roland Petit "might" make an appearance with Colette.

The time: 3 p.m. at the Wilcox Studios in Bryanston Street, Marble Arch. Non-members of the circle are admitted at 2/6.

Tickets for the circle's film show on October 30 at 7.30 are not yet available but may be ordered (3/6) through H. Humberstone, 8, Carol Street, N.W.1, to whom a stamped and clearly addressed envelope should also be sent.

Films to be shown come from France, Russia, Australia and Hungary and may include the new UZBECK DANCES.

★ DANILOVA (see story)

● MIME THEATRE

The Mime Theatre Company are at the Edinburgh Festival during the first week of this month. At the Gateway Theatre in Leith Walk they will be staging four pieces, CONSPIRATORS, ETERNAL TRIANGLE, GWYNETH VAUGHAN and PIERROT AT THE CIRCUS. Clifford Williams directs this group whose aim is to re-establish mime as a major theatrical art.

Certainly some instruction in mime as opposed to first primer gesture might help our ballet companies.

● NEW TV BALLET

Michel de Lutry is arranging the choreography for Metro's KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE. In the film there is a medieval court dance for which Michel has coached Ava Gardner, Mel Ferrer and Robert Taylor. He also has a novel solo — dancing blindfold on a banquet table strewn with eggs . . . without breaking a single shell! I also hear that Domini Callaghan will partner Michel in a new video ballet to Tchaikowski's First Piano Concerto which will premiere from the Radio and T.V. Exhibition on September 5.

● BALLET (CITY) WANE?

Business is still bad for ballet in the United States if current touring figures of N.Y. City Ballet are a guide. Cut-priced tickets were on sale after just the first week of a month's stand at Los Angeles' Greek Theatre.

● MARKOVA AT JACOB'S

Alicia Markova appeared at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (Mass.) and danced in BOLERO 1830. I have no details of this new work but could it be a satire on someone else's Bolero 1940s?

During the festival another new work—SERENATA—was presented by La Meri and Di Falco to music by Granados.

● NEW CONCERTS

Founded and directed by Igor Schwezoff, Ballet Concerts—a group of sixteen dancers—started a Latin American tour at Teatro Colon in Bogota during July.

Until Late 1954

. . . New Group . . . Mime Theatre

● **NEW FESTIVAL**

A festival that both recoups well at the box-office and makes an artistic success is worth recording. Last month one did just that: Granada's Moorish Alhambra festival with Margot Fonteyn, Sadler's Wells and a fortnight of music by Segovia, Zabaleta, the Argenta Orchestra. Among attendees: Sol Hurok, eager to import the Argenta Orchestra into the United States.

● **MADONNA DANCER**

Wendy Hilton, who choreographed and danced to four songs of Sibelius for Ballet Workshop's last programme, has neglected stage for canvas recently.

The photograph seen here is of a painting by the American artist Edward Hurst. Wendy sat for this portrait as a breaking-in to Hurst's painting of her for his 'Madonna'.

Which does she prefer of herself? No answer.

● **VIDEO ANNUAL**

Kenneth Bailey, editor of the Television Annual, will have an article written by Alicia Markova in the 1953 edition. Alicia should have interesting comparisons to draw between the American networks and Lime Grove!

● **TO BERLIN**

Ballet Theatre appeared at the Berlin Cultural Festival.

Other ballet at the third edition of the festival which started on August 30 came from the Royal Opera, Stockholm and Berlin's Staedtische Opera.

The festival continues until September 27.

. . . AND TO NEW YORK

Maurice Seymour, the deservedly famous dance photographer, (remember his Markova shots?) has opened a studio on Broadway although he retains his Chicago address, too.

● **SIDELINE PROBLEMS**

The yet-another increase in London Transport fares has ballet and theatre directors worried.

To stress their worry may I tell them that a sharp 15% to 25% drop was tabulated in the recent upricing of fares in New York City. Obviously such a drop would be disastrous here.

The Rambert season has proven again that London will not support more than two major theatres with ballet. The Wells was in very bad box-office condition although the programmes for the first week justified good business.

Festival Hall and Covent Garden remain at little under capacity to prove the saturation point in London is between 4,000 and 5,000 seat-buyers an evening.

WENDY HILTON (see story)

● **CO-OPERATION**

I personally feel that managements must accept this approximation and co-operate towards it.

Alonso . . .

ON Sunday, July 19th, Alicia Alonso spoke to the London Ballet Circle about her career, her views on dancing, and her company in Cuba.

One question which interrupted Miss Alonso's flow of information, was to enquire her opinion on modern ballet, as opposed to the established classics.

Miss Alonso said that the classics were the fundamental basis from which all ballet must grow, but the only point that mattered was whether ballet was good or bad.

She believes that it is necessary both for us, and posterity, to speak of the times in which we live so tomorrow shall see today's ballet as a reflection.

To her, FALL RIVER LEGEND is a wonderful example, not only of great theatre, but of a contemporary ballet. When dancing in it she felt that the artists concerned, together with the audience's reaction, were doing something for ballet today.

This ballet reflected the mind-sickness that pervades the world today and Miss Alonso thought that the people of this country would find it especially poignant in view of certain murder sensations recently . . . In a similar way, BILLY THE KID was a very real thing to the North American, who thoroughly understood the essence of the work.

Two other works, apart from classical ballet, which were very dear to the speaker, were ALEKO and LILAC GARDEN, in which she has danced both leading roles.

MALE DANCER

Miss Alonso concluded this two hour talk with some comments on the position of the male dancer today.

In her experience, she found that parental disapproval was the commonest basis to the "male dancer trouble."

He was made to feel his 'peculiarity' from the start; sometimes he worked under tense family relationships or he even broke away from them altogether. Such a break is bad enough for anyone and worse for an artist.

And yet, others are unfeeling enough to complain that this poor man is 'a little odd' or 'different.' Once his status was raised and there were sufficiently virile roles to satiate the public, she felt that the position might ease.

The other great drawback, which affected both parent and dancer, was the financial angle. Even now, there is no security or pension scheme. This would have to be established in all fairness and sanity.

Miss Alonso added that Cuba was no exception to the artistic stifling prevalent today in favour of commercialism.

. . . speaking

THE first Spring of peace is for the ballet-goer a part of his memories of our first visitors from overseas since the end of the war. Les Ballets des Champ-Elysées as they first presented themselves to our delighted and astonished gaze, now call forth the same nostalgia that the ballets of Diaghilev hold for an earlier generation.

PETIT

They matched the season and the year to perfection with their youth and daring and high ambition; even the small world of ballet seemed with them to be on the threshold of a new golden age.

DARING ORIGINALITY

As he is often unmusical, has a remarkable visual imagination and daring originality one might say that the only choreographer to influence Petit has been Lifar; but there is more to Petit's work than that.

His ballets have a haunting poetry of atmosphere, an obsession with love and death which both fascinate and repel him, and a sense of theatrical effect which perhaps only Robert Helpmann with his vast experience of the stage can equal as a choreographer.

He knows the value of understatement (a choreographer should not explain too much), of oblique suggestion, and that a good ballet should leave us with a sense of mystery—ballets in fact like Cranko's HARLEQUIN IN APRIL and THE SHADOW, full of hints half-guessed and disturbing implications.

This is seen in LES FORAINS, which still remains Petit's finest ballet. Perhaps the loveliest of all works created for the post-war world, its pathos and haunting beauty have not survived although the ballet still remains in the repertoire.

UNEXPECTED BEAUTY

With Berard's evocative decor and Sauguet's exquisite music which contains all the tinsel glitter of the circus and its sudden moments of exhilaration, this ballet is a genuine commentary upon life and the pathos of human aspiration. With a similar theme Helpmann in ADAM ZERO failed; but by its very simplicity the symbolism of LES FORAINS strikes direct to the heart.

Petit's choreography showed an astonishingly original vision; he has the gift denied to most choreographers of suddenly investing a commonplace *enchainement* with a twist of invention that gives it a new and exciting perspective. It is like looking at a building from a fresh angle; one finds an unexpected beauty in familiar things.

The ability of Petit was marvellously realised later in TREIZE DANSES — his most fascinating work—and in BALLABILE which he composed for the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

Each has a curious air of inconsequence, the atmosphere of a dream. In BALLABILE the scene by the river has all the heavy sultry air of one of de Maupassant's stories, but this is intensified and outside reality.

DREAM WORLDLY

The dancers seem isolated from one another, each moving in a world of heightened feeling and sensibility. The fisherman who without explanation suddenly walks across the scene and sits away from them points to their own isolation; it is almost as if he were an intruder from the real world into the world of dream.

language one cannot fully comprehend. We are left with unanswered questions.

Elsewhere in BALLABILE Petit appears to be parodying himself—the Petit of LE RENDEZVOUS, and CARMEN, the young man obsessed with death and lust and betrayal, the choreographer of his time and country.

Despite its immaturity LE RENDEZVOUS has a wonderful sense of the sqalid dusty streets of a Paris slum—the posters, years old, hanging from the walls, the prostitutes, beggars and feckless young people so familiar to us through the French cinema. The opening scene has something of the intensified realism of Helpmann's MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS, while it contains a *pas de deux* between the young man and a hunchback which has a grotesque and fearful beauty as disturbing as that between The Ballerina and the Moor in PETROUCHKA which it slightly resembles.

This idea of a young man seeking out Death in the guise of his beloved is one to which Petit was to return with the aid of Cocteau in LE JEUNE HOMME ET LA MORT.

As in TREIZE DANSES there is an undercurrent full of mystery, an underlying poetry which speaks in a

By R. J. AUSTIN

The use of Bach's C Minor Passacaglia to accompany the squalid brutalities taking place on the stage produces in the audience a feeling of almost unbearable tension which is sublimely resolved when the walls of the garret move away and Death leads her lover over the roof-tops of Paris towards the peace embodied throughout in the music.

REBELLION

Petit's experience of the Paris Opéra was bearing fruit. His work is one of those periodic rebellions, like that of Nijinski in LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS, from which ballet gains its strength and is saved from sterility by its traitors.

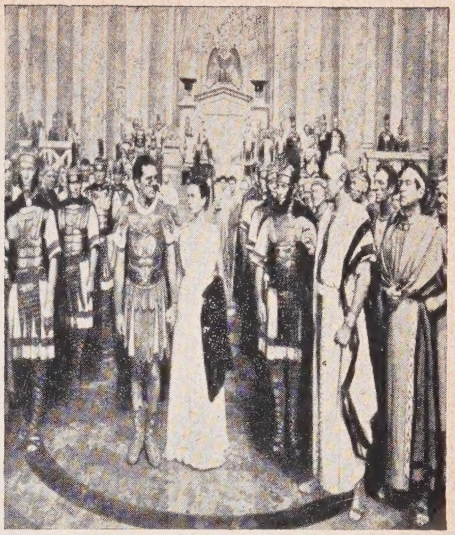
Petit's greatest popular success was CARMEN, first produced in London in 1949. Here in the bedroom scene, a long *pas de deux* between Petit as Don José and (now) Marchand as Carmen he reaches the peak of his achievement.

No one else in modern ballet except the Anthony Tudor of LILAC GARDEN and PILLAR OF FIRE has managed to give so clear and subtle a portrayal of closely related emotional states as did Petit in these dances he composed for Renée Jeanmaire, now danced by Colette Marchand.

The choreography mirrors every sensation of physical love—coquetry, tenderness, contentment; then fear, scorn and the greediness of reawakened desire.

One hopes that this masterly composition points the direction Petit's erratic genius is to take.

★ The Prospect For Film Choreography



★ The photograph above illustrates normal screen "squeezing" of the image, the photograph below is of the same set shot in 20th Century-Fox's Cinema-scope technique, most thought-provoking of the new systems.

AS the pedestrian swell of dance films reaches a peak and the privately expressed ideas on film choreography gather more mossy idealism than concrete testing grounds, the question of point is: has cinema choreography a definition, a prospect?

In the past month, apart from the Hollywood lists of dance films, I have been promised an 'almost good' experiment in BETTY SLOW DRAG, a Frankie-And-Johnnie themed short, and a first Spanish 3D entitled THE LAKE OF TCHAIKOVSKY shot at Barcelona's Orpheus studios by Rovira Beleta. Running eleven minutes, this Technicolor ballet short is currently showing in Barcelona and is a fantasia based on Act 1 of SWAN LAKE.

LOCATION

I have also seen an enlivening use made of Spanish dancer Jose Greco in the undistinguished SOMBRERO; heard from Broadway and New York City Ballet choreographer Jerome Robbins that he is now directing all Columbia's dance — starting with PAL JOEY, and had a four hour discussion with a director who sees BLOOD WEDDING as a natural epxeriment in actual location ballet for the cinema.

From there, where?

The choreographic depths have been well plumbed by various films in the past and by television in the present. Yet scope there must be for an amalgamation of cinema and ballet. Several lines of experiment bear examining:

CINEMATIC?

1. Do dancers make more cinematic actors? Ex-Canadian Film Board director Ernest Borneman suggested they do, basing this partly on Rene Clair's use of ballet people in several early movies. My explanation of the dancer's photogenicy (or camera-adaptibility?) is his being accustomed to sheer interpretation of his choreographer's demands. Few actors accept so easily a command as does a dancer, even of first rank.

The dancer's ease of line in movement also presupposes a cinematic rightness that has not been discovered. And the dancer's knowledge of preparation and movement from point to point might be an upcoming factor in the longer take processes being married to 3D and widescreen developments.

TO A PLOT

2. Is there a possibility of a choreographer merely inventing movement to a "dance plot" already laid down by the director?

Choreographers are brooding introspects more used to replanning their collaborator's work than rethinking their own to meet a director's scheme. Yet the lack of visually talented choreography or cinema thinking among contemporary choreographers makes it unlikely that a choreographer can be found to work in terms of cinematic dance.

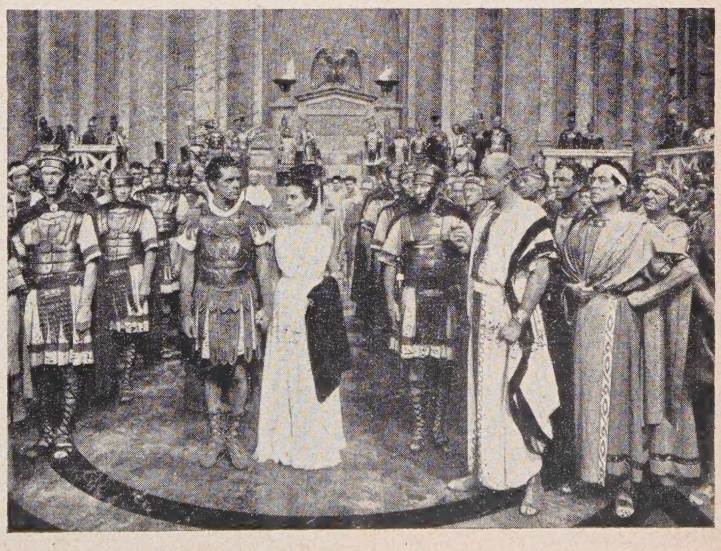
But an able director who can 'see' dance as an integrated part of his film and can express his need to a choreographer: the partnership might pan out to a cinematic choreography unexplored so far.

Obviously cinema-ballet has to take on a fixative of its own if it is to become more than an intermittent gimmick. Excerpts from classic ballet as in the Soviet films, and stage-thought ballet sequences as in the general run of dance films; these are mere guestings.

THINKING

Cinema-ballet itself must be a dance thinking that cannot be worked or conveyed except via the camera and—in turn— a cinematic use of exclusively created dance that could not have anything else substituted in its place.

With this year probably ending as a record for ballet appreciation "en masse" both in London and the U.S., the time is obviously ripe for any entry by such a cinema-ballet as I have suggested.



BETTY

SLOW

DRAG

WITH the financial help of an enterprising theatrical producer and the loan of premises and equipment, the impossible became possible when a group of talented people decided to make a musical film that was to be like no musical ever made before.

"Betty Slow Drag," the result of this enterprise, is a parody on the ragtime era set against a backdrop of a Southern United States waterfront town and featuring the three stock characters of underworld balladry: the Wicked Gambler, the Misled Country Girl, the Suave Devil.

The supporting cast consists of types drawn from the world of slapstick cinema: Keystone Cops, bloomered bathing belles, compassionate neighbours, dispassionate bartenders.

The whole ballad of how Slow Drag the gambler shoots Rosenbloom the jeweller to get Betty, his girl, a diamond ring, and how Betty manages to persuade the Devil down below to hand her back her man as well as his numerous other victims *and* the jeweller, is sung, off-screen, in a blues-singer's deadpan voice.

GREEK CHORUS

A barbershop quartette comments on the action like a Greek chorus. A ragtime piano, a marching brass band, and a small Jazz group that runs through all the shades of blues back up the voices and state the beat against which the action is choreographed.

Ernest Borneman, who wrote and directed the film, is a 38-year-old Canadian working here as a script-writer. Malcolm Rayment, the 35-year old composer who wrote the music, is a one-time Jazz trumpeter now considered by many as one of the most talented composers of the modern school.

Russell Quay, a 33-year-old painter who designed the sets, describes himself as "the descendant of rogues and pirates on the Isle of Man—two hanged at Tyburn." Together Ursula Hertz, a textile designer, and Scilla Light (who made Betty's entire line of costumes out of a single black corselet with a hundred and one accessories) fashioned what little Betty wears by using skill and ingenuity rather than cash and what it could buy.

DOUBLE ROLE

The film was choreographed by Jashf Grandall, a dancer and actor. Formerly with the Ballets Russe, he dances, at 63, the double role of Rosenbloom and Sergeant Brown with incredible agility. Lynn Cole, who came straight out of school to snatch the part of Betty from dozens of girls tested for it, began her career promisingly by falling ill on the day of production.

After the usual frantic all-night conferences without which no film ever seems ready to start, the producers decided to postpone the film for one week—high compliment for a 19-year-old girl. But her school was the same one which graduated Jean Simmons to stardom, and it looks as if "Betty Slow Drag" may have opened an equally specacular career for her.

Already she has been selected by Paramount to play the female lead, opposite David Murray, in "Strangers on the Sea" and by John Paddy Carstairs to play a featured part in "Top of the Form." Recently she has played in two Pinewood films, "You Know What Sailors Are" and "Always a Bride," written by Peter Ustinov's brilliant double, Peter Jones.

Ted Monson who came from Australia, working his passage over as a sailor, to break into ballet, plays Slow Drag with a fierce, swaggering intensity that shows traces of his father's training—Ted is the son of Australia's 1929 middleweight boxing champion. "Betty Slow Drag" brought him a part in the London show of "Guys and Dolls"—it should bring him more important roles when the film goes out into release later this year.

The result of selfless, devoted, gruelling work by talented enthusiasts of all ages and half a dozen nationalities, this film shows that the cinema as a creative form has not yet died in the age of three-dimensional zeros.

By Eva Guisel

Photographs : John Vickers

Ninette de Valois

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Here is a new edition—the sixth—of Dame Ninette de Valois famous classic, with a fresh introduction specially written by the author.

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THE BODLEY HEAD

Borge Ralov

Portrait of a Dancer

by Alice Kaposi

THE brilliant sunshine of a clear June morning streamed through the large windows and scattered bright patches over the walls and the crowded book-shelves. The multi-coloured aquarelles on the walls seemed to breathe real life, and a portrait of Petrouchka grimmaced at me from the wall of the music-room.

My host and I were standing in the window and enjoying the beautiful sight of the wide river softly undulating in the morning breeze. Swans were gliding serenely over the glittering ripples, and wild ducks were basking in the sunshine on the banks of the little "Bird Island." Along the banks of the river, on the long avenue, horse-chestnut trees were proudly bearing their white blossoms.

It was a most beautiful early summer morning—as beautiful as a chapter from an Andersen fairy-tale.

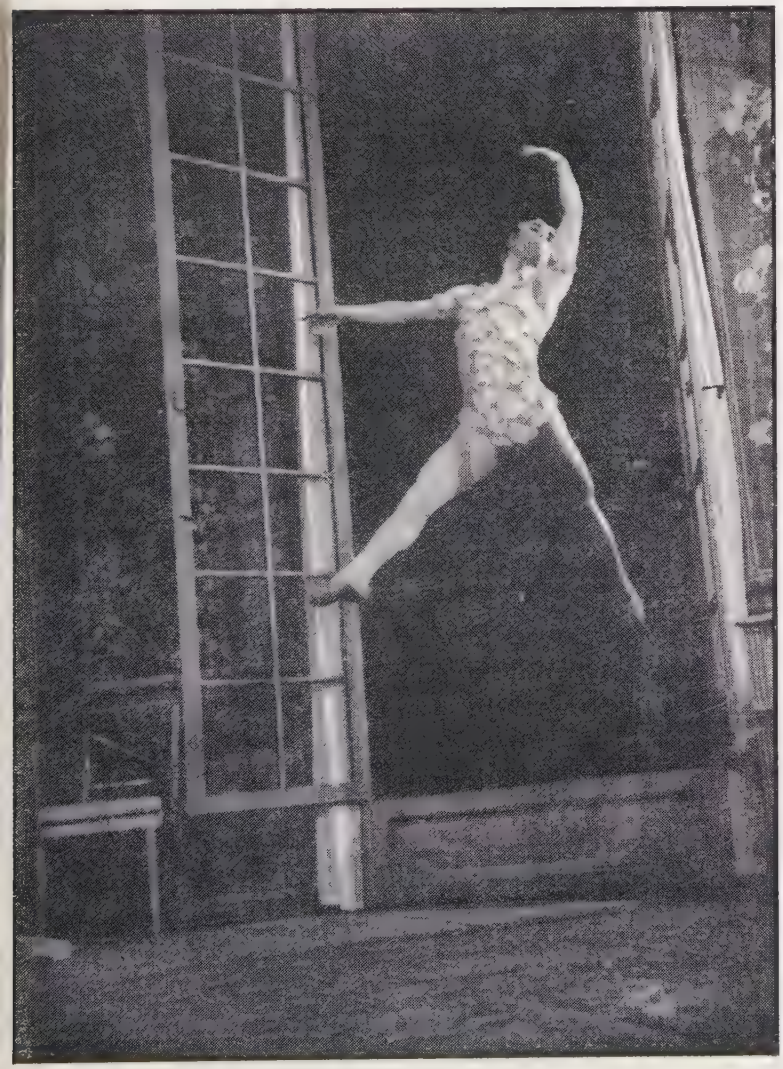
My host was Borge Ralov, the illustrious and unrivalled star of the Royal Danish Ballet, to whom the title "Royal first solo-dancer" and "Primo Ballerino" (a title never bestowed before) was given. The scene was his sunny and friendly home in Copenhagen.

We settled down in two armchairs in his study—and what followed was so different from my numerous experiences with great and not-so-great artists whom I have interviewed in all parts of the world. Usually an interview is a sequence of conventional questions and plain, conventional answers while the famous man tries eagerly to get rid of the journalist as quickly as possible. And from this meagre skeleton stuff we have to build up a glamorous story around him, introducing him to the readers as they imagine him, charming, witty, warm-hearted and enthusiastic about his art.

But here in Copenhagen, in this sunlit study I met a really warm-hearted and great artist who was not afraid to tell his life-story with sincerity. Art and life react upon each other. Art as a mere exhibition of technical brilliance is not real art; it becomes real when it is imbued with personal human elements, and when it is filled with emotional content with joy and sorrow. Artistic creation is conceived in passion and born in inspiration and that is why a live stage performance is always superior to any mechanical reproduction.

Ralov, as a really great artist, is modest. He does not boast about his brilliant career and it came to my mind, that had he been born in America, his name to-day would be a household word with the masses.

■ Ralov in SPECTRE



EARLY GUIDANCE

He was born in Copenhagen in 1908, as a child of a family deeply interested in art. His uncle was Poul Eltorp, ballet master of "Le Ballet Suédois," and it was evident from his early childhood that he would follow in his uncle's footsteps and become a ballet dancer.

Borge Ralov's first appearance on the stage of the Royal Theatre took place in December 1918, three months after he had been accepted as a pupil of the famous ballet-school attached to the Theatre. He danced the role of one of the pupils in Bournonville's LE CONSERVATOIRE.

He graduated as "ballet aspirant" in 1925 and that was the beginning of a brilliant career which has expanded quickly and surely. Many, many years spent in hard work earned him an unrivalled reputation and the appreciation of audiences in Denmark and in the countries where he appeared as guest artist. His superb artistry was acknowledged in the highest quarters: he was knighted by King Christian X and he treasures the personal friendship of King Frederik IX.

To page 21 please

Ballet in Sweden

By EDITH BARKING

LIKE the Danish company who were with us, the Swedish ballet has had a long tenure of state patronage. For almost two hundred years, since the Opera House was founded in Stockholm by Gustav III in 1773, the dance in Sweden has had this permanent home.

Louis Gallodier was the first *maitre de ballet* and choreographer, he joined the Opera for the inception of the *corps de ballet*. Almost completely French in substance, it was Gallodier of the Paris Opera, who encouraged public taste in ballet towards Madame du Tillet, Louis Frossard, Giovanna Bassi, and other foreign dancers.

After Gallodier arrived Antoine Bournonville. Here was an interesting case of the pupil being accepted whilst the master—Noverre—was refused. Noverre himself did ask for a position in Sweden without any success.

NATIVE-BORN

Bournonville's most popular ballet was THE FISHERS in 1789, but he left to join the Danish Opera for which his son, Auguste, later was to do so much.

The first native-born *maitre de ballet* was Anders Selinder who was with the company for two lengthy periods—1833 until 1845 and 1851 until 1856. Another native *maitre*, Robert Sjoblom, followed and gave way to a succession of German ballet masters until Fokin arrived. This was in 1913.

Fokin must, at this time, have been forming in his mind the famous (although none too often published) "Five Principles" which he set down in a letter to the TIMES the following year. Quoting that letter, they were:

1: To create in each case a new form of movement corresponding to the subject matter, period and character of the music, instead of merely giving combinations of ready-made and established steps.

2: Dancing and mimetic gesture have no meaning in ballet unless they serve as an expression of dramatic action.

3: To admit the use of conventional gesture only when it is required by the style of the ballet, and in all other cases to replace the gestures of the hands by movements of the whole body.

Man can and should be expressive from head to foot.

4: The group is not only an ornament.

The new ballet advances from the expressiveness of the face and the hands to that of the whole body, and from that of the individual body to groups of bodies and the expressiveness of the combined dancing of a crowd.

5: The alliance of dancing with other arts.

The new ballet, refusing to be the slave either of music or of scenic decoration, and recognising the alliance of arts only on condition of complete equality, allows perfect freedom both to the scenic artist and to the musician.

SONATA

So it was the Swedish ballet which gave Fokin the success his aesthetic deserved after his leaving Diaghilev. For the company he mounted several of his Diaghilev-era works.

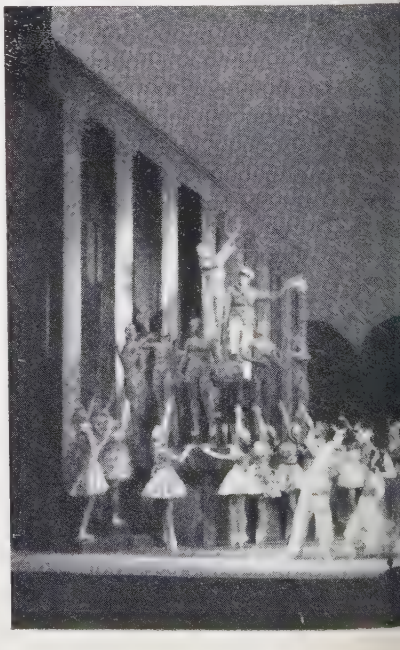
His only created work for the company, however, was MOONLIGHT SONATA in 1918. Neither this nor any remnant of his recreations for the Opera House remain in the repertoire.

Another period of lethargy succeeded Fokin's tenure until, in 1919, Les Ballets Suedois was founded by Rolf de Mare. This company produced twenty-five de Mare ballets with choreography by Jean Borlin. (Later de Mare directed the Paris Theatre des Champ-Elysees).

Borlin, a Fokin disciple, drew most of the de Mare group from the Stockholm Opera Ballet and premiered the company in Paris in 1920. For four years the modern work of this group excited interest in France and at home.

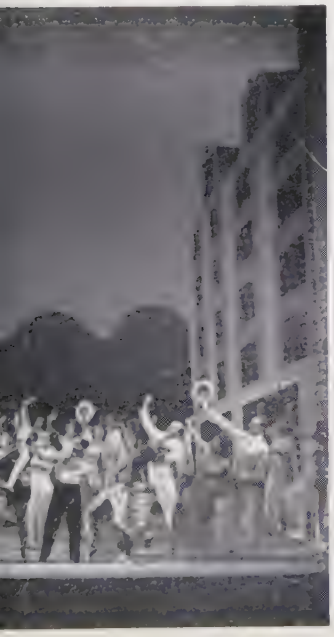
● **Jenny Hasselgvist was one Ballet.**

● **ORPHEUS IN TOWN balle Rosenberg.**



ng dancers of the Swedish
Photo: Goodwin.

by modernistic Hilding
Photo: Jarlas.



- **An experiment made at the Drottningholm Theatre some four years ago to give a review of the history of dancing.** (See "Notes" on next page).

- **Birgit Akesson who has been seen in France away from the Swedish Ballet, representative of the free dance form.**

Ballet it Sweden from page thirteen

The young Leger produced decor for the company as did Nils von Dardel, music was written by modernists such as Milhaud, Auric and the lesser known Alfven, Atterberg, and Faillerferre. Ballets produced during this period included EL GRECO, L'HOMME ET SON DESIR, CREATION DU MONDE and RELACHE.

RETURNED

Borlin returned to Stockholm in 1923 to create two native ballets at the Opera: MOUNTAIN KING and FOOLISH VIRGINS. In 1927 the Polish Jan Cieplinski joined the Opera Ballet to be followed by a Laban pupil, Julian Algo.

From a thinking in German terms, Swedish Ballet has not even yet recovered. Good or bad the influence of Laban and Jooss was to enter often.

The free dance form was introduced before 1920 by pupils of Anna Behle who had been trained in the Jaques-Dalcroze School.

In the thirties Kurt Jooss began his influence, Birgit Cullberg studying for some years under Jooss and creating—since the early forties—Jooss-influenced works.

At the Opera Birgit Cullberg has created MISS JULIE (the only popular success of the company's London season) and several other ballets. Ivo Cramer, too, was influenced by Jooss.

NEEDS

Some years ago, in a dance magazine, a Swedish writer said that his country's ballet needs a de Valois, a Helpmann, even a Baylis.

By the next time England sees the Swedish Ballet I think it will be clear that such needs have been met and a distinguished ballet is still very much alive.

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Notes . . .

★The review of dance history (see photo. top right on previous page) at the Drottningholm Theatre in 1948 started with the baroque period (L'EUROPE GALANTE, Campra), and continued through rococco (BIRGER JARL dances to Uttini music) to the romantic represented by Act 2 of GISELLE. The photograph shows the theatre's production of GISELLE.

● **Birgit Cullberg, a Jooss-disciple, as the Spider in her ballet of that name.** Photo: Pan.

PREMIER DANCER

★Premier classical dancer of the company is Bjorn Holmgren who appeared with them in London as did Elsa-Marianne von Rosen.

PICASSO

★Birgit Akesson (see photograph, bottom right on previous page) has attracted great attention for her dance fantasies influenced by the sculptures of Pablo Picasso.

IN MALMO

☆Ballet is also presented at the very beautiful City Theatre in Malmo.

DURING JULY

★A surprising number of Swedish dancers were in London during late July and BALLET TODAY has commissioned one of the visitors to write a special article for a later issue.

REPORT FROM Reyna IN PARIS

Liane Dayde (left). And—below—Violette Verdy who scored a tremendous success with Roland Petit in London.

SINCE July 3rd, **Jean Babilee** is now the happy father of a little girl **Isabelle.** To John Babilee and his wife **Nathalie Philippart** our best wishes.

The Annual **International Dance Festival** at Nice, was held in the first two weeks of July, dancers from Austria, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Great Britain, Switzerland and France attended the Festival, and 25 groups of "Folklore Dancers" added to the success in which the "Bird Men" were especially noted. This group came from Guinea.

Maurice Lehmann, director of the Opera, has asked **Roland Petit** to design a ballet for the Opera—this young choreographer proposes to create a ballet with **Renee Jeanmaire,** music by **Offenbach.** Although **Roland Petit** is not yet free to accomplish this. The Season will open in October with **La Belle Helené** and **Renee Jeanmaire.** The composer **Louis Aubert,** will adapt the partition, but the choreographer has not yet been chosen.

Renee Jeanmaire is due to be in New York, on Broadway, for Christmas where she will appear in the Musical Comedy **The Girl in Pink Tights,** Choreographer, **Michel Kidd.**

At the Paris Opera House on 30th October, we shall see **Weber's Oberon** in an original setting. For the first time there will be a "Flying Ballet" and the dancers will be suspended by wires and lowered on to the stage. Some new forthcoming ballets at the Opera will be **Le chemin de la Lumiere**—by **Georges Auric—Les Noces Fantastiques** by **Delaunoy,** and **Le Printemps** by **G. Binet.**

Yvette Chauvire danced every night at the Opera during July, whilst the choristers were away on holiday. She danced **Giselle, Le Lac des Cygnes, Le Cygne (Sain Saens)** and **Istar.**

This last ballet was presented for the first time since the Occupation when, in December 1941, **Yvette Chauvire** personally created it.

It was this work that brought her to stardom. The earlier production of **Istar (Vincent d'Indy)** was produced in 1934 with **Leon Bakst,** and **Serge Lifar,** and created by the famous **Trouhanova**—choreographer was **Yvan Clustine**—costumes were by **Georges Desvalieres.**

The story of **Istar,** is based on the symbolical "Eternal Return" with its evocation of Spring and approach of the cold and dreary Winter. **Bakst's** production portrayed seven heavily guarded doors, of which six were guarded by two long-robed figures, the seventh being guarded by angels.

Istar approaches the figures, and slowly disrobes them of their earthly riches. Symbolical of the stripping of the leaves preceding Winter. The seventh door opens and portrays a magnificent fairy garden, which symbolises the return of Spring upon Earth. The ballet is short, and has seven variations.

In the last production **Serge Lifar** chose **Yvette Chauvire** to take the part of the mysterious goddess, and her success was instantaneous. The applause intense and emotional, as the audience had not forgotten that it was at this very theatre that **Yvette** played the part of THE LITTLE RAT in 1940, during the horrors of a war that caused so much suffering to the artists of Paris.

Serge Lifar who partnered **Yvette Chauvire** in **"Giselle"** made certain changes in the scenes, and if by chance **Yvette Chauvire's** technique did not come up to her usual standard, her interpretation was true.

In **Lac des Cygnes** she danced with **Youli Algaroff.**

In spite of his rather serious expression, **Algaroff** is a fine dancer, in the true meaning of the term. His elegance and poise is exceptional, and his natural talent as a dancer excludes that of the acrobat.

Ballet Month – Coming Events

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
at Covent Garden

Aug. 25: CINDERELLA, Fonteyn/Somes.
Aug. 26: CINDERELLA, Elvin/Hart.
Aug. 28-28: BALLABILE, BALLET IMPERIAL, SYLVIA pas, FACADE.
Aug. 29: CINDERELLA, Elvin/Hart.
Aug. 29 (eve): CINDERELLA, Nerina/Rassine.
Sept. 1-2: SYLPHIDES, VENEZIANA, TIRESIAS.
Sept. 3-5: CINDERELLA.

Beryl Grey will not be dancing as printed in the issued programme, nor will she be with the company during their tour of the United States. She will resume early next Summer, probably, after the birth of her baby. (See Digest story).

ROLAND PETIT BALLET
at Stoll Theatre

Aug. 31-5 Sept.: Deuil en 24 Heures, Le Loup, Carmen.

Sept. 7-12: Deuil en 24 Heures, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice, La Perle.

Sept. 14-19: Deuil en 24 Heures, Carmen, Cine Bijou.

Sept. 21-23: Deuil en 24 Heures, Cine-Bijou, Le Loup, La Perle.

Sept. 24-26: Deuil en 24 Heures, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice, Carmen.

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

PILAR LOPEZ COMPANY:
August 31-September 2: First programme of Spanish dance.
Sept. 3-5: Second programme.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET:
Sept. 7-9: PASTORALE, RAKE'S PROGRESS, ASSEMBLY BALL.
Sept. 10-12: FETE ESTRANGE, HARLEQUIN IN APRIL, CARTE BLANCHE.

Note: CIRCA DE ESPANA is also announced by Ballet Theatre although not listed on the Festival's printed programmes.

YUGOSLAV NATIONAL DANCERS
at Sadler's Wells

Sept. 7-18: Folk Dance Programmes.

from page 4

Ballet Theatre Season

THE COMBAT. Here is Dollar's duel again with more fuss and less fusion. Some ungainly lifts mar the final sequence and only Wakhevitch's clever perspective decor impressed me.

THREE VIRGINS AND A DEVIL. Long joke and a thin one. The little boy devil is fun, perhaps, but the virgins are barren of humour.

GALA PERFORMANCE. Unfortunately programmed immediately after **THREE VIRGINS,** this even thinner joke by Tudor left me unsmiling. The "faulty technique" ballets are so often embarassing to an audience which cannot quite be positive where to laugh. Embarassing to the dancers even more, I imagine.

BILLY THE KID. Kriza danced this well although I found the Loring ballet dragging more than I remembered it to do. Copland's excellently scored music does much to make the work.

LAC DES CYGNES, ACT II. Alonso's Odette has a genuine protective feeling for her swans and cygnets which I have missed in other dancers. LAC is so treated as a classical—i.e. clinical!—test that the acting usually goes unthought. Alonso acts and adds something to Odette. Not a simple thing to do. Her line is pure, her technique brilliant, her partner—Youskevitch—unrivalled.

TILL EULENSPIEGEL'S MERRY PRANKS. The dancing, the ballon of Eric Braun saved this work by Babilee. Ruth Ann Koesunn is the second saving virtue. Music by Strauss is rather wasted on this prank but some novel dancing does emerge—especially a fine pas de deux for Koesunn and Braun and a 'pulled through' movement between the two that was imaginative.

CAPRICHOS. This ballet of bad taste is with us again with Bartok's effective music almost lost to the haze of movement on stage. Some of Koesunn and Kriza's work is good. On second viewing this season a tighter production made for greater cohesion and theatrical effect. In many ways a masterpiece of deliberate movement counterpoint.

LA FILLE MAL GARDEE. This Dauberval work is shockingly produced here with insipid decor and most garish of costumes. A **GISELLE** with comic relief.

QUOTES

Lionel Collier in PICTUREGOER, reviewing the film "Twice Upon A Time": "Violetta Elvin is good as a ballerina."

. . . Well, there's a piece of character work for you. Like Claire Bloom's dancing in LIMELIGHT, perhaps?

Richard Buckle in THE OBSERVER, reviewing Ballet Theatre in terms of praiseworthy Balanchin: " . . . to Melissa Hayden working for Ballet Theatre after leaving Balanchin's company must be like taking a course at the Polytechnic after being apprenticed in Titian's studio."

. . . Out of the 'frig . . . into the fire?

AMERICA'S FOREMOST DANCE MAGAZINE

DANCING STAR

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A PRE-SEASON QUESTION

IS THERE A USE FOR BALLET WORKSHOP

ANGELA and David Ellis must by now have come back to thoughts of how to run ballet—even experimental ballet—without red ink. Wishing their new season success, I wish it also as free of the financial worries as possible.

But what of the red ink of wasted experiment? Have the past few years of Ballet Workshop closed their ranks to find a common starting point for the new season's direction? Is there, in fact, a use for Ballet Workshop?

IT CAN

What such a conclave can produce is the little ballet, the novel ballet, the testube ballet. But must these testtube affairs be so artificial? Does a secretarial school teach pet and private shorthands or Pitman's?

Pitman's, of course.

But does Ballet Workshop ever realise that it is a testing ground for talents who will be seen in the major theatre?

From what I have seen of the work: no.

The difficulties are too many, the personal circle of acquaintances too easy to rely upon, tricks a suave substitute for mental novelty.

But a ballet "workshop" must not be a closed shop of the few nor a hothouse for untheatrical gimmicks. If anything, it must be a non-repeating stage for the new dancer, choreographer, designer and composer.

IT SHOULD

In this, Ballet Workshop has failed. The subtitle of a workshop project should be "We never stopped changing." But in many ways this project at the Mercury Theatre has stood still.

The commercial company of Rambert's has done more experimenting, whilst making ends meet, than has Ballet Workshop whilst being subsidised by subscriptions and almost token-paid dancers.

Is it a crime to be no Rambert? Of course not. The Ellis's only crime—if such it is—lies in taking the temperature of a melting-pot with the same thermometer too often. To add cliche to cliche: too many cooks spoil broth but a broth itself is judged on the variation of its ingredients.

IT IS

How does a dancer get out upon the Mercury stage? How is a composer or scenist or choreographer admitted? A workshop should have its tools on the table, its machinery open to the public. I think Ballet Workshop is in the rut of facility when it should be running after foundling talent.

Will the next season prove me wrong? I hope—sincerely, directors Ellis—that it does.

STUDENTS IN VENICE

AT the beautiful "La Fenice" opera house Venice has just witnessed a really amazing evening of Ballet, when the Academy of classical dancing gave an entire evening's performance in aid of the Red Cross. That children between the ages of 4½ and fifteen should be able to sustain such a programme with success is proof indeed of their versatility, powers of expression and confidence in themselves.

The choreography of the three works presented was by Signora TURITTO ALESSANDRI, the principal of the Academy. In the first, SOGNI, the smallest children performed alone, supported later by others more advanced. In the remaining two ballets — FANTASIA ROMANTICA and LE CREATURE DI PROMETEO, the senior pupils performed, the male rôles being presented "en travesti," yet most effectively. The latter ballet, a most ambitious work in two acts with music by Beethoven, revealed much beauty of line and good characterisation.

Just now the school numbers some 140 pupils from which 100 were chosen to perform the other evening. About 30% of these eventually pass into the ranks of the Corps de Ballet of the various opera houses in Italy. The school has been in existence only three years, which speaks volumes for Signora Alessandri's skill in instruction whereby such a high standard has been reached already.

Signora Alessandri stresses the great importance of a musical education progressing concomitantly with the dancing lessons.

ROBERT PATERSON.

Ballet Backgrounds—2

JEAN GEORGES NOVERRE

JEAN George Neverre, the famous choreographer, has been called, with some justification, by several authorities on the dance, the Father of Modern Ballet. The celebrated actor, David Garrick, referred to him as the Shakespeare of the Dance.

Noverre was the first to lay down the new generally accepted principle that all good ballets should have well constructed plots which the art of the director and the dancers should be used to develop. He, it was, who demonstrated the futility of the stylised classical ballets which were then featured in all theatre repertoires. His system of training was founded on sound anatomical principles and he also emphasised that all movements and gestures must be natural. This was a great help in abolishing the many ridiculous postures which had marred the art of the ballet dancer in previous eras. Noverre not only wrote on the technicalities of dancing itself but also set out very sound views on the designs of playhouses and on securing ideal acoustics for them. He suggested the replacing of the footlights by indirect lighting, fixed on the pillars in the auditorium.

It was only possible to exploit this idea fully when all theatres were illuminated by electric light. Even then the idea was not immediately adopted and it is only within recent years that Noverre's suggestion has been generally brought into use. Noverre also recommended fire curtains, fire drill for stage hands and adequate gangways and exits.

These ideas were revolutionary in his day but are now compulsory by law. Noverre was born in Paris in 1727. His mother was French and his father a native of Lausanne but despite this fact he was an officer in the Swedish army. It was hoped that young Noverre would also adopt a military career but he preferred to become a ballet dancer.

He was sent accordingly to the dancing school run by that eminent teacher Louis Dupre. Under that great master he made his first professional appearance at the open air theatre at the Foire St. Laurent in Paris. This playhouse was taken over by Jean Monnet in 1743. Monnet was one of the leading impresarios of his day and he engaged, as leader of the orchestra, Jean Ramcau, who was one of the most brilliant experimental writers of music for the ballet and opera of the period and he had the greatest influence on the future work of the young Noverre.

Thus the young dancer was set firmly on the road to fame and fortune and was eventually approached by Garrick to bring over a company of French dancers to Drury Lane and staged there his ballet, "The Chinese Festival." After a considerable amount of haggling, terms were agreed upon.

The aristocracy of England warmly approved the idea of bringing over the French company but not so the commonalty. The French were very unpopular with them for at that period England and France were engaged in a life and death struggle for the possession of Canada. Serious riots broke out not only in the streets but also in the theatre iself and Garrick's house was besieged and the windows broken. The trouble makers in the theatre were reinforced by a lusty band of butchers and the scenery and stage mechanism were destroyed and many of the costumes damaged.

After the rioting in London had died down young Noverre became a dancer at Drury Lane but when he retired he settled down at Norwich and opened an academy of dancing in the old Assembly Rooms.

Noverre's last production in London took place in 1794 and then he returned to France and found there many changes. The Revolution had resulted in the loss of all his savings and he was looked on by the Republican authorities with suspicion, being regarded by them as the pampered pet of an aristocracy which had now been swept away. Eventually he secured the payment of part of the pension which in days gone by had been allotted to him. He then retired to St. Germain en Laye with his wife.

By this time the great artist was in a very frail state of health and he occupied his time by writing and in tending his flowers. He passed away on October 20th, 1810, in his 84th year. He had in one way been unfortunate for he had lived on into a social state in which he had no part and with which he had very little sympathy. Those wishing to know more about the work of Jean Georges Noverre for the improvement of the ballet are referred to the book, "The Chevalier Noverre," by the late Deryck Lynham, which is published by the Sylvan Press.

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CONTEMPORARY THINKING IN BALLET—A SERIES OF EVALUATIONS BY PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

IT is a creditable if curious fact that the first man I think of here is George Balanchin. Creditable to be first; curious in that my interest in this choreographer on my tongue's tip is not matched by my praise.

Why, then, should a choreographer I doubt come first when trying to summarise contemporary ballet thinking?

Balanchin has an influence that outstands his worth of purpose. He has a talent that outstands his backlog of created works. A promise gone awry? Hardly: he has very deliberately chosen his own way.

His influence on the next decade will, I think, be considerable. That is why this series of evaluations begins with the classical masterbuilder whose houses are no more than impermanent prefabrications.

BALANCHIN AND BALLET'S NEXT DECADE

HOW many ballets are there? The *grand classicism* of the Russian, followed technically by contemporary Soviet ballet. The *utility grand* of Sadler's Wells which erupts more often as one-act pieces. The *spartan* of Balanchin which exploits the utility fabric. And the *native Americana* mixed with *roadshow classicism* of National Ballet Theatre.

Boiled down the decade is one of the various grand classicism-followers (Wells, the Soviet and Ballet Theatre) versus Mr. Balanchin.

Fundamentally Balanchin could have been a force for the good of ballet. I admit immediately that his basic approach heralded better for ballet than that of Ballet Theatre or the rest. But the depression which lurks behind most of his work has skuttled the promise. Balanchin is, very nearly, ballet's delegate to existentialism. And no worse cult than this one of depression exists.

The French companies, more in the location of existentialism, have escaped it. If they were more staple—yet not as artistically staple as the Opera—these French groups would promise more fully than their American and British rivals. As it is they give ballet a fillip when, and if, they arrive.

TO CHANGE?

Can Balanchin be expected to change? Hardly. To develop in a more optimistic way? Perhaps. To realise the two qualities he always ignores—male strength and magic? Again, perhaps.

Enough has been said of Balanchin's upstaging the New York City Ballet's men. His lack of interest in them. Natural to his sex but not good for ballet! But his refusal to allow ballet's magic on his stage is even more important. His constant practise-clothes-in-classroom ballets serve an excellent purpose in showing ballet's physical line and motion potential. But they serve ballet, as an audience-appealer, not at all. Currently under the weather of yet another financial storm, Balanchin seems not to see that the way out is to recapture magic, illusion, escapism, romanticism . . . call it what you will.

NYCB has its devotees, of course. And from several varied motives. To me the company is spendthrift with its talent. An evening's programme is like a menu of excellent routines but without a choreographic 'waiter' to accept one's order for the finished meal. The ingredients are here—but they remain just that . . . ingredients.

UNPOURED

If no change comes about, the New York City Ballet will reach history (my version, anyway) as a tragic cocktail of impressive talents left unpoured. Balanchin can take credit as an ice-cold movement specialist who never warmed to a ballet result.

The decade to come?

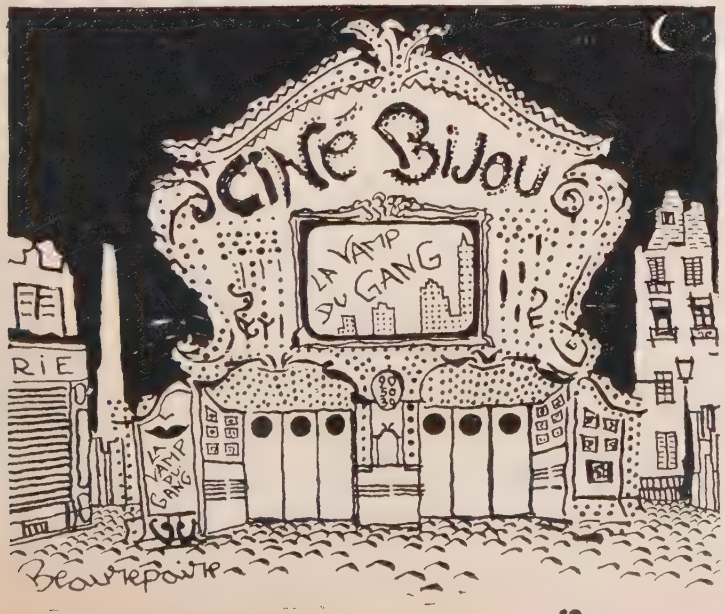
Balanchin, unless he agrees with this last paragraph at some future date, will return to a tiny avant-garde audience. The full-length, spectacle ballet will hold sway.

The tragedy is that Balanchin could create such ballets as no living choreographer can. His incredible range of movement-thought, his stage patterning, his deeply underwritten solo choreography . . . all unmatched.

Balanchin is not a man doing what he can as best he can. He is a man who deliberately stunts a whole sphere of his own talent. He has a purpose, to me disdirected. But I can only respect what such an artist produces.

And wish he would explore that other sphere.

★ BEAUREPAIRE'S CINE BIJOU DECOR FOR ROLAND PETIT'S BALLET WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE STOLL THIS MONTH.



DISCS

"AIR OF PEACE"

ENIGMA VARIATIONS (*Elgar*), *SUITE OF DRAMATIC MUSIC* (*Purcell*), *London Symphony Orchestra* (*Sargent*), *Decca LXT* 2786.

FRANK Staff's ballet to these variations was first performed in November 1940. This rendering under Sir Malcolm would have greatly pleased the composer, for it is played with great care and distinction. The Purcell Suite is equally good, and its air of peace is like balm in a restless world. Recording excellent.

HOROSCOPE (*Lambert*), *FACADE* (*Walton*), *London Symphony Orchestra* (*Irving*), *Decca LXT* 2791.

The wit and humour of Façade are familiar to most ballet-goers, but there must be many who have not seen "Horoscope" and Fedorovitch's entrancing decor and costumes. Michael Somes made his debut in "Horoscope" and his dancing to Lambert's striking music was much acclaimed. I hope that we will be allowed to see this ballet once again in the Wells repertoire. Two excellent performances by our leading ballet conductor. Recording very good.

PRINCESS AURORA (*Tchaikowski*), *Ballet Theatre Orchestra* (*Levine*). *Capitol CCL*7519.

This is a most pleasant selection from the Prologue, Acts I & III of the "Sleeping Beauty." The Pas de Quatre (Act III) is better known as the Bluebird Pas de Deux—pas de deux, male solo, girl's solo and coda for both dancers. I am disappointed in a certain lack of feeling in the conducting and some harshness, particularly the brass, in the recording—surface noise is negligible.

DANCE OF THE HOURS from LA GIOCONDA (*Ponchielli*), *MIGNON OVERTURE* (*Thomas*), *L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris* (*Fistoulari*). *London LD* 9014.

The new "Medium Play" 33 1/3 r.p.m. record at 18/0½d. is excellent value, enabling pieces of this length to occupy one side each. It should prove popular as they are attractively played and well recorded. LA GIOCONDA is a fine opera, first produced in 1883, but it was not until 21 years later that it took a firm hold on the repertoire. It has an Italian theme of love and hate, and in Act III, Alvise holds a fête in the great hall of his house. The "Danza delle Orè" is danced to entertain his guests and in its mimic action it was intended to symbolize the eternal struggle between the powers of darkness and light. Cavalazzi, one of the leading dancers of her day, appeared in it, receiving tumultuous applause.

CAPRIOL SUITE (*Warlock*), *VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF FRANK BRIDGE* (*Britten*), *Boyd Neel String Orchestra* (*Boyd Neel*), *Decca LXT* 2790.

CAPRIOL SUITE is early Ashton of great simplicity, charm and dignity, beautifully set to Warlock's music.

It was originally created for the Ballet Rambert and is now frequently in the repertoire of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet.

On the whole, here it is well interpreted and recorded—the attractive "Pieds-en-l'air" being outstandingly so. The Variations are early Brittain at his most tuneful and it would be no surprise if one of our choreographers uses them. The orchestra and the engineers deserve high praise.

CHILDREN'S CORNER SUITE (*Debussy*), *KINDERSCENEN* (*Schumann*), *Walter Gieseking* (*piano*). *COL* 33*C*1014.

Cranko's odd but taking little ballet to Debussy's suite will long remain in my memory because of Jane Shore's sensitive dancing which had a strange and appealing quality difficult to explain, even to myself. Gieseking's interpretation is simply superb as is his rendering of Schumann's Scenes from Childhood. The engineers have done an excellent job, except for some slight crackle at the beginning. **B.C.**

...briefly

Circulo Iniciacao Coreografica ballerina Anna Maria Mascolo has now joined de Cueva's company in Rome . . . Pilar Lopez returned to Madrid last month from her Latin American tour . . . Boscoe Holder's Caribbean group who have been at Churchill's club for some time have moved to Monte Carlo for a season there . . . Another New York City Ballet book is on the way—at three pounds the copy . . . written by N.Y. Herald Tribune critic Walter Terry to photographs by Paul Himmel this one is BALLET IN ACTION . . . . curiously like the title of Roger Wood's recent book here which was reviewed in the July BALLET TODAY . . . Moira Shearer may dance with Festival Ballet before the end of the year . . . and in the provinces, not London . . . Her STORY OF THREE LOVES may well be a good advertisement for her appearances . . . Michael Charnley danced several times for Festival Ballet at the beginning of August . . . a fan club has been formed for Danilova . . .

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Ralov from page 11

When Balanchin visited Copenhagen 23 years ago, he produced six ballets. He chose young Ralov for four of his productions, and first he entrusted him with the role of the Can-Can Dancer in LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE. He performed the role with great élan, he was dashing and amusing, a perfect dandy and became the focal point of the comedy. The second role was the part of the Miller in THE THREE-CORNERED HAT—one of the most difficult roles in the modern repertoire. His youthful fire, his speed and the sharpness of his attack mastering this role. Served him well in it. After dancing the jealous Spaniard, he was entrusted with the most contrasting role possible, that of the young Joseph in JOSEPH'S LEGEND. His beautiful appearance and poise made a great impression; he was the perfect impersonator of the young and chaste Biblical Joseph. He devoted great care to every detail and his performance was subtle and moving. The fourth part danced under Balanchin's direction was the role of the Officer in BARABAU.

BY STORM

It was during these performances that he took audiences by storm and his fame on the Danish ballet scene was firmly established. He spent his holidays studying in Paris and London under such masters as Alexander Volinine, Laurent Novikoff, Nicolas Legat and Stanislas Idzikowsky. From 1935 until the outbreak of the second world war he appeared as guest artist at the opera houses of Brussels, Hamburg, Karlsruhe, Berlin, Paris, Versailles, Oslo, Stockholm, Malmö, Helsinki, and after the war he visited Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

During his visits to foreign countries he received tempting offers of engagements, but he declined all of them. He knew that in the great centres of dancing, in Paris, London and New York he would have been able to acquire world fame and wealth, but he is a patriot above all and to serve his country and his nation was dearer to him than anything else.

Ralov is a premier danseur noble of the greatest purity. He is not short and not tall, perfect in build and with a noble carriage. His technical brilliance, his poise and elegance are admirable.

His magnificently easy elevation; his masterful, clean and unstressed beats; his leaps, his way of soaring and gliding, his wonderful lightness in downward motions are unique. He has a vast repertoire, dancing the lead in more than fifty ballets. His range is enormous, from scintillating bravura and broad farce to the rendering of deepest human tragedy.

His perfect sense of style enables him to excel equally in the classical and romantic repertoire and in modern dance drama. He is the artist whose presence fills the stage with electrifying tension.

★ Ralov and Kirsten Ralov in AURORA'S WEDDING

In the moonlit, romantic atmosphere of LES SYLPHIDES he flies and circles through the air with supremely executed and graceful movements. The sweet melancholy, tenderness and spirituality of Chopin's music is wonderfully interpreted by him.

At the end of the Mazurka, he finishes his dance by going down on one knee — his arms beautifully spread out like wings. After the performance I went to see him in his dressing room where I met Vera Volkova. "You were wonderful"—she told him and kissed him on his forehead. "I like your last pose, your arms—not too high and not too low, just perfect."

EQUAL ROLE

In Ralov's interpretation the role of Albrecht becomes of equal importance with that of Giselle herself. In the first act his dance radiates youthful joy and the tenderness and happiness of first love. In the second act, when he arrives to lay flowers on Giselle's grave, he is princely and matured under the burden of grief.

Harlequin and Columbine look back on a long tradition in Denmark. The characters of the Italian Commedia dell' Arte established themselves on the Danish pantomime scene a long time ago and in the charming Tivoli Garden a permanent home, the Pantomime Theatre was erected to house them. Here Harlequin has been performing his merry pranks to the delight of the Danes for more than one hundred years.

Emilie Walbom, who produced her DREAM PICTURES in 1915, was not only inspired by Fokine's LE CARNAVAL, but also by the pantomime tradition.

Emilie Walbom revived many lovely and also funny Biedermeyer characters in her divertissement, but the main and central figure of the comedy is Harlequin.

He reigns over the stage and with his wooden sword he commands the exhilarating frolic. Ralov dances the part of Harlequin with wit and humour, exploiting his technical brilliance and personal charm to the utmost.

PLASTIC SENSE

Ralov, who has exceptional imagination and a strong plastic sense, was naturally attracted by L'APRES-MIDI D'UN FAUNE and produced it in 1943. Unfortunately the Danish critics were against Nijinski's choreography, they labelled it sophisticated, artificial and affected—and the whole ballet seemed to them antiquated. So L'APRES-MIDI D'UN FAUNE was ousted from the repertoire after a few performances, to the sincere sorrow of the producer who created the title role with so much enthusiasm.

It is interesting to observe how different tastes, likes and dislikes are in the world of art. When the Faun was produced in New York, by the Basil Company in November 1936, Edwin Denby wrote in his criticism: "The Faun is an astonishing work. After twenty-three years it is as direct and moving as though it had been invented yesterday."

To page 22, please

Ralov from page 21

The Copenhagen performance of PETROUCHKA is a masterly production. Ralov, in the role of the immortal and unhappy hero, proved to be a great dramatic actor. His rendering of the humiliated and despised man is deeply moving. His whole body expresses his mental suffering, his agony — imprisoned helplessly in the black and gloomy cell. He frantically bangs the wall with his fists as a tragic protest against Fate . . . Love and Beauty are denied to him—and overcome by despair he sinks to the ground. I have seen many performances of PETROUCHKA but none of them have conveyed so perfectly the thrilling intensity of the drama as the Copenhagen version—which was produced by Fokin himself in 1925.

FAMOUS PARTS

Besides his roles in the international repertoire, he has created many famous parts in Danish ballets, particularly in the Bournonville repertoire, such as FAR FROM DENMARK, VALKYRIEN, LE CONSERVATOIRE, LA KERMESSE DE BRUGES, LA SYLPHIDE and the most famous among them: NAPOLI. His characterisation of the temperamental Neapolitan fisherman is something that every ballet-lover must see. The part demands the utmost in dancing, the widest range in acting and the warm southern colours of the Mediterranean.

His rich imagination, his innate musicality and his deep humanistic culture predestined him to be a choreographer. He started by arranging ballets for operas, plays and films. His first large scale work, THE WIDOW IN THE MIRROR, was produced in 1934. The ballet was very favourably received. Critics agreed that THE WIDOW IN THE MIRROR was the first modern Danish ballet of lasting value and they expressed their hope that Ralov would become the great innovator of the Danish ballet.

THE WIDOW IN THE MIRROR tells the symbolical story of a young, rich society lady who during the conventional and monotonous daily routine of her married life begins to sense that something is wrong with this sort of life.

After the sudden death of her husband she has the courage to break the empty frame of her previous existence and to set out on a new venture into poverty.

It is easy to discover the kinship between the WIDOW and Ibsen's *Nora* of A DOLL'S HOUSE. The underlying idea of "The Widow in the Mirror" is to free ourselves from the fetters of the conventional and empty manners of social life—and the door is open for anybody to start a new life. THE WIDOW, like *Nora*, begins to comprehend, that there is another world outside her windows, and that a woman is also entitled to her own judgement. Both heroines revolt against society and the revolt is carefully motivated. And finally both of them take the decisive step—to leave home.

Ralov handles the theme with rich inventiveness and his choreography is abundant in witty, grotesque and symbolical details.

FIRST ONE

His next work was presented in 1939 and with "The Four Temperaments" he created the first Danish symphonic ballet. The ballet is composed to Carl Nielsen's beautiful second symphony of the same title. The story portrays a young man's meeting with four women, the choleric, the phlegmatic, the melancholic and the sanguine—and the emotional resonance of his longing, joy, disappointment and his final resignation. The work is highly poetical, rich in beautiful details, and above all Ralov created a very expressive role for himself.

"I tell stories with all my heart . . ." wrote Hans Christian Andersen in 1842 and one hundred years later Borge Ralov retold the story of the "Twelve with the Mail Coach" with the same warm-hearted simplicity and humour which was Andersen's very own.

★ Ralov as Harlequin in DREAM PICTURES

In 1944 Ralov produced two ballets, THE ETERNAL TRIO and PASSIONS. In THE ETERNAL TRIO he created a Kammerspiel—the title is self explanatory and is a direct reference to the theme. The story unfolds itself between the man, woman and seducer and offers opportunity for a wide range of dramatic acting.

PASSIONS, composed to Scriabin's music, has no plot; it is pure movement in the symphonic style.

BURLESQUE

PASSIONS was followed in 1947 by a burlesque KOLINGEN. Ralov's latest work, THE COURTESAN to which Niels Viggo Bentzon, a prominent young Danish composer has written music, will be produced in the next season.

Ralov's artistic creed as choreographer is based on Fokin's five principles. In his ballets he is always searching for a new interpretation of the classical dance and he strives to make the ballet convey more drama. "Dancing and mimetic gesture have no meaning in a ballet unless they serve as an expression of its dramatic action, and they must not be used as mere divertissement or entertainment . . ."—he quotes again Fokin. "We must fill the dance with spiritual content, so that audiences have something to think of and discuss when they leave the theatre—and not only the entrechats and pirouettes of the dancers."

Tragedy came into his life when his marriage with Kirsten Ralov, the beautiful ballerina, broke down suddenly after ten years of married life. It was a dreadful blow for this sensitive and deeply religious man, who in his private life is just as idealistic as in his artistic creed. How often we ask whether the stage imitates life, or our life is modelled on the stage. It happened that in his private life he has had to play unwillingly the role of Petrouchka—and it was just as bitter and tragic as on the stage.

He adores his seven year old son; to give him the best education and secure a happy childhood for him, is the greatest aim of his life.

When I asked him, whether he would like his son to become a dancer, he said: "This year he attended a folk-dancing class and one day I noticed that he was standing in a perfect first position, which had never been taught to him.

"But I don't want to spoil his childhood with rigorous training—he must be happy and free . . ." I felt the sadness behind these words, the lost childhood and the many, many years spent in the hardest work; the never ending classes . . . and the sacrifice—which is the price of being a great dancer.

TRENDS IN POST-WAR BALLET

By JAY NORMAN

A PESSIMISM of outlook, the outmoded presentation of an idea and choreography that is inexpressive, repetitive and out of date seem to be characteristics of many ballets created since the war.

Perhaps the outmoded presentation of an idea appears most often in ballets in the Romantic vein. The perennial and universal search of the poet in all of us for his Ideal has been the theme of numerous Romantic ballets since the middle of the last century, but whereas Massine's SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE and Ashton's APPARITIONS, for instance, were legitimate dressings up of this idea in the balletic convention of the time, this convention is no longer valid and the search needs to be expressed in the accepted language of the day. Some of the recognisable features in an outmoded method of presentation are the use of points and tarlatan to suggest the Ideal, the anguished wanderings of the 'poet' and the contrasted gaiety of his companions, as in Cranko's THE SHADOW. The Cocteau-Petit LE JEUNE HOMME is the twentieth century equivalent of the Romantic ballets of the last century.

JOOSS

LE JEUNE HOMME also serves as an example of pessimism, in this case sublimated by the choreography and the Bach music. Similarly, apt choreography relieves the mood of de Mille's FALL RIVER LEGEND. On the other hand, pessimism is overwhelming in Robbin's THE CAGE. Gore's ANTONIA, Rodrigues' BLOOD WEDDING, Robbins' THE AGE OF ANXIETY and Howard's MIRROR FOR WITCHES are other examples of this pessimism.

Although the Ballet Jooss is a little outside the current ballet scene it is perhaps relevant to note that during the Spring season at Sadler's Wells it became apparent that the Jooss outlook had remained predominantly "between the wars," even the latest ballets appearing old fashioned in theme and the characters pre-war types. THE NIGHT TRAIN, for instance, proved to be little more than an elaborate charade of the kind inseparably linked with parties of the late twenties — the easily recognisable young girl, artist, opera goer and so on. The dream sequences too, seemed oddly naive. Another characteristic of the company was a heaviness and a pessimism that seemed not entirely due to lack of lightness in the choreographic style. In the serious ballets, such as JOURNEY IN THE FOG, this took the form of a defeatist outlook on life, an attitude that admittedly often accompanies Central European work.

YOUNG

Inexpressive, repetitive and out of date choreography is seen in the work of many young choreographers who, ignoring the ground explored by Massine, De Valois, Tudor and De Mille, seem to have specialised in ballets of the 'abstract or near 'abstract' type, with competent but monotonous arrangements of classroom steps set to well known music. Perhaps even more significant is the eurythmical adaption of classical steps to symphonic music as in many of Balanchin's neo-classical ballets.

To some, Balanchin's work shows that the future of classicism is secure, but to others it appears choreographically and musically sterile, and his extension of the classical alphabet an artistic regression. To a true admirer of the classical tradition, grace, harmony and authority of movement are essential, and the leanness, candour and streamlined elegance are a contradiction of its meaning. Balanchin's version of SWAN LAKE, ACT II has aroused considerable controversy, and perhaps its most depressing features are choreography and exposition completely oblivious to the sensuous grandeur of the Tchaikovsky music.

EASY

It is easy to say the need is for choreographers able and willing to create for to-day and for to-morrow. The pessimism and escape into the past are no doubt largely due to the outlook of the time and it is admittedly difficult for creative artists to be optimistic in an age without hope in the future or faith in man, though artists have not always needed propitious times to produce great work.

Repetitive and out of date choreography can only be remedied by choreographers ceasing to exploit the Diaghilev inheritance and willing to think out for themselves the possibilities of the classical style. Perhaps it may even be necessary to feel back to the fundamental rhythms of the human body to evolve the dynamic classicism of the future.

By PATRICIA

TWO First nights, Ballet Theatre and Festival Ballet, yielded quite a number of good fashion pointers.

EMBROIDERY

First, embroidery. Heavy and colourful, Chinese style.

It was seen down the centre of full length sleeves on a short white coatee; on a hip length black satin loose jacket; in a wide panel down the length of a scarlet silk stole. To each of its wearers it imparted an air of utter feminity—a grace almost of the age of crinolines and parasols.

STONES, SEQUINS

The second too, is embroidery but with stones and sequins instead of silks.

Round the edge of a tule juliet cap (which matched the wearer's hair) were sewn tiny, glittering flower motifs — the result from a distance was a circlet of brilliants in her hair.

The ends of a stole were adorned with tassels of jet which matched the jet trimming on the bodice of the dress. A black evening blouse fastened with tiny pearl buttons and had its collar outlined with pearls.

OUTSTANDING

The two outstanding women were Sonia Arova, in a semi-crinoline of silver and white brocade with a matching fitted jacket whose long sleeves ended in tiny fur cuffs — and an unknown American woman wearing a navy blue taffeta dress, the neckline was high and finished in a demure Peter Pan collar of white pique.

Her accessories were a miniature hat-box handbag and a long white stole in sparkling white pique.

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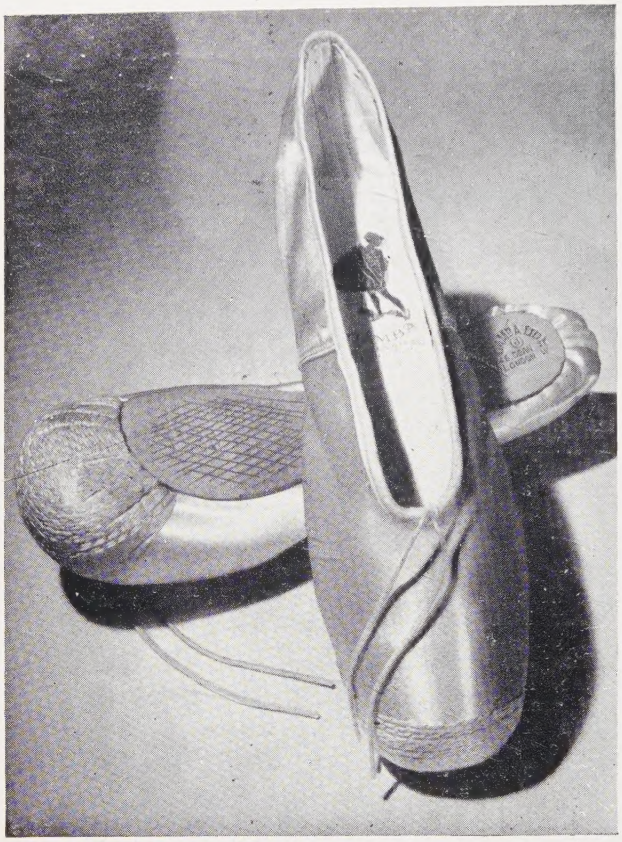

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BALLET TODAY is published from 15 Penrhyn Road, Kingston, Surrey, by B. C. Herschel. Advertising communications to J. Stonebanks, 33 Crawford Place, W.1. Tel. PAD 2038. Printed by The Anchor Press, 119 Ewell Road, Surbiton, Surrey. Subscription rates: 14/- one year. All material in **BALLET TODAY**, written, drawn and photographic, is copyright in all countries. It may not be reproduced in any way whatsoever without previous arrangement with the Editor.